

Remarks by U.S. Chargé d'Affaires David R. Burnett
(as delivered)

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**THE NEW ZEALAND-U.S. RELATIONSHIP:
INTERESTS, VALUES AND VISION**

Thank you very much Michael Barnett. The Honorable Phil Goff, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: It is a real privilege to be here with you today. Thank you, Mr. Minister, for that excellent overview of the key elements in the New Zealand-U.S. relationship. I would like to offer a few observations on the nature of that relationship -- past, present and future.

In the children's book "The House of Coloured Windows," New Zealand icon Margaret Mahy wrote: "Anthea dreamed of the wizard's windows. She wanted to get into the wizard's house and look through first one window and then another because she was sure that through one of them, she must see the world she really wanted to live in."

Our respective national interests and values may determine the kind of world in which we want to live, but without strategic vision, we can only stand at the window, looking out.

During the next few minutes, I would like to paint a picture for you of the New Zealand-United States relationship, highlighting some of our shared interests and values. I would also like to touch on areas where we have shared or still share strategic vision. Finally, I would like to pose the question "which of all possible bilateral relationships would you like to live in?"

Our formal relationship began in 1839, when the United States appointed its first diplomatic representative to New Zealand. Then, in 1840... Don't worry ladies and gentlemen, I'm not going to give you a blow-by-blow history of our bilateral relationship. It's probably enough to point out that our countries have been friends since just a year before the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. Over the years since then, our relationship has grown upon the foundation of a common language, similarities in cultural background and shared commitment to the principles of democracy, freedom and peace.

Of course, we both recognize that peace is more than the mere absence of war; it is the absence of the conditions that lead to war. Occasionally, in a handful of countries, unchallenged oppression at home or unchecked aggression abroad have threatened our shared vision of a free, peaceful, democratic world. Together, we have exercised leadership in moving toward the world we want to live in, and we have paid the price of leadership. We fought side-by-side in four wars, including two world wars, defending our vision of the

world. In Afghanistan, our countries were part of a great coalition of nations that uprooted terrorists and the Taliban regime that harbored them. We remain partners in the struggle against terrorism and in our commitment to the right of people to live free from fear.

We were together at the founding of the United Nations, and continue to share substantial interest in bringing badly needed reform to the multilateral system, consistent with our shared vision of that system as a means of ensuring collective security.

New Zealand has also demonstrated strategic vision and leadership in its strong support for global free trade. It is not the moral or intellectual rightness of your point of view that causes the rest of the world to look to New Zealand's leadership in this area, right though you may be. Rather, it is because you paid the price of leadership. While it is true that you did not have much choice but to end agricultural subsidies and reduce tariffs in the mid-80's, your courage in doing so and your success in achieving significant gain after the pain has set an example that the rest of the world must recognize.

We have stood with you in the World Trade Organization in support of free and open global trade. Our negotiators in Geneva have been working together trying to craft agreements that would break down barriers to freer agriculture, industrial and services trade, important steps in putting the Doha Round back on track. At stake is the

prospect of all countries -- developed and developing -- growing their economies and helping their citizens raise their standards of living. That our countries share this goal should come as no surprise, because we both benefit from liberalized trade.

We also are partners in pursuing many other global issues, including trafficking in persons and other law enforcement issues, as well as cooperation in science and technology, oceans and fisheries. Last month, our Bilateral Climate Change Partnership announced three joint projects aimed at enhancing the exchange of scientific data to aid in the efficient management of ecosystems. This is part of our ongoing cooperation on climate-change issues. In addition, since 1961, New Zealand and the United States -- along with other signatories to the Antarctica Treaty -- have worked together to ensure that Antarctica remains an international preserve for science and peace.

As with most relationships, we have our differences. Not surprisingly, these differences receive prominent coverage by the media, especially in an election year. We try to maintain a sense of humor and perspective about these things, though I must admit, we don't always succeed. Of course, in order to keep things in perspective, it helps to be able to discuss our differences as they arise, to determine whether they result from conflicts in interests, changes in values, or shifts in strategic vision. As Ambassador

Swindells noted in his farewell speech, failure to get at the underlying causes of our differences leads to assumptions about motives, unrealistic expectations, and a risk of increasing distrust that can affect areas of the relationship on which we do agree.

Clearly, one issue where we continue to explore whether our countries' interests coincide is the possibility of a bilateral free-trade agreement. We accept that New Zealand believes such an agreement would be in its interest. The New Zealand government understands that, to achieve such a deal, it must take its case to the U.S. government and to the people of the United States. As the Minister has pointed out, New Zealand continues to make that case and we encourage it to do so

As U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Zoellick has made clear, each free-trade agreement that the United States undertakes must stand on its own merits. Our interest in free-trade negotiations is based largely on the economic and commercial benefits, and the possibility of an agreement with New Zealand is not linked to any other issue. As we consider whether to enter negotiations with New Zealand, we will continue to listen to the New Zealand government, we will weigh our national interests, and we will take into account our other trade and strategic priorities. Meanwhile, we will work hard to make certain that we do not create expectations that either partner is unwilling or unable to fulfill.

In closing, let me make very clear that whatever party or parties the people of New Zealand choose to govern them next month, we look forward to working with that government wholeheartedly and with good will. Of course, both countries realize that good will alone will not suffice; we must each choose the kind of relationship in which we want to live. Will it be a relationship based on shared strategic vision? If so, we will work with New Zealand to make that vision a reality. In areas where we do not share the same strategic vision, will we work on the basis of shared values? And where we may not share values, will we work to identify shared interests?

Of course, our relationship is not limited to the relationship between our two governments. As New Zealanders looking out of the wizard's windows, what possible New Zealand-U.S. relationships do you see for yourself, your company, your country? What kind of relationship would you choose?

Whatever your choices may be in the months and years that lie ahead, you will find Americans standing ready to work with you to make our bilateral relationship all that it can be.